

09/482,679

*Amendments**In the Specification:*

Page 8, replace the paragraph beginning on line 13 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Figure 2 illustrates a conventional guide track 21 wherein sliding surface 21a consists of sliding plates, or respectively sliding bodies 37, set off in steps in the conveying direction (arrow 36) of the tobacco stream. As can be seen, air flow nozzles 23 terminate on the respective steps in guide track 21. This known construction has the result that in the area of a step, between two sliding plates, the tobacco stream meets the air flow coming from the air flow nozzles only at the end of a relatively long free trajectory, where the air flow has already lost approximately two-thirds of its exit velocity. In order to accelerate the tobacco stream to a predetermined value, the flow speed of the air flow must therefore be increased by an increase in the blower output, which negatively affects the overall power economy of the system.

*In the Claims:*

*NP*

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1. (Amended) A device for creating a spread-out stream of tobacco fibers, comprising:  
a concave-curved guide track along which the fiber stream of tobacco fibers are conveyed, the guide track having a generatrix based on a uniform curve; and  
at least one air jet having an air flow opening interrupting the guide track so that air exiting the air flow jet acts in a conveyance direction of the fiber stream for spreading out the tobacco fibers.

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Figure 2 illustrates a conventional guide track 21 wherein sliding surface 21a consists of sliding plates, or respectively sliding bodies 37, set off in steps in the conveying direction (arrow 36) of the tobacco stream. As can be seen, air flow nozzles 23 terminate on the respective steps in guide track 21. This known [know] construction has the result that in the area of a step, between two sliding plates, the tobacco stream meets the air flow coming from the air flow nozzles only at the end of a relatively long free trajectory, where the air flow has already lost approximately two-thirds of its exit velocity. In order to accelerate the tobacco stream to a predetermined value, the flow speed of the air flow must therefore be increased by an increase in the blower output, which negatively affects the overall power economy of the system.

#### *In the Claims:*

1. (Amended) A device for creating a spread-out stream of tobacco fibers, comprising:  
a concave-curved guide track along which the fiber stream of tobacco fibers are conveyed, the guide track having a generatrix based on a uniform [generating] curve; and  
at least one air jet having an air flow opening interrupting the guide track so that air exiting the air flow jet acts in a conveyance direction of the fiber stream for spreading out the tobacco fibers.